The following claims are presented for examination:

1-28. (Canceled)

29. (**Currently amended**) ~~**An accelerator according to claim 28,**~~

A load balancing accelerator, comprising:

an input interface which receives packets directed to a load balancer. the load balancer and the load balancing accelerator being separate from one another;

a table which lists packet groups and their respective destination servers, the table having physical entries which can accommodate different field sets for storage of data entries;

a comparator which compares at least one of the packets directed to the load balancer to one or more of the data entries of the table;

a forwarding unit which forwards at least one of the packets for which a match was found by the comparator, directly to a server, responsive to the contents of the matching data entry; and a controller which determines in which field set, from the plurality of different field sets, each of the data entries of the table is stored;

wherein the controller comprises a user interface through which a user may configure the field sets in which the data entries of the table are stored.

30. (Canceled)

31. (**Currently amended**) ~~**An accelerator according to claim 30,**~~

A load balancing accelerator, comprising:

an input interface which receives packets directed to a load balancer. the load balancer and the load balancing accelerator being separate from one another;

a table which lists packet groups and their respective destination servers, the table having physical entries which can accommodate different field sets for storage of data entries;

a comparator which compares at least one of the packets directed to the load balancer to one or more of the data entries of the table;

a forwarding unit which forwards at least one of the packets for which a match was found by the comparator, directly to a server, responsive to the contents of the matching data entry; and a controller which determines in which field set, from the plurality of different field sets, each of the data entries of the table is stored;

wherein the controller automatically determines the field sets in which the data entries are stored; and

wherein the controller transmits one or more packets to the load balancer and examines the response of the load balancer to determine the field sets in which the data entries are stored.

32. (Canceled)

33. (**Currently amended**) ~~**An accelerator according to claim 28,**~~

A load balancing accelerator, comprising:

an input interface which receives packets directed to a load balancer. the load balancer and the load balancing accelerator being separate from one another;

a table which lists packet groups and their respective destination servers, the table having physical entries which can accommodate different field sets for storage of data entries;

a comparator which compares at least one of the packets directed to the load balancer to one or more of the data entries of the table;

a forwarding unit which forwards at least one of the packets for which a match was found by the comparator, directly to a server, responsive to the contents of the matching data entry; and a controller which determines in which field set, from the plurality of different field sets, each of the data entries of the table is stored;

wherein the controller determines the field sets in which the data entries of the table are stored, such that at least during some periods of operation of the accelerator, the table includes at least two data entries stored in different field sets.

34-41. (Canceled).